

the unemployed, and seniors. It is about lifting people out of poverty. It is about supporting our economy. It works for households with children.

ADJOURNMENT FROM TODAY TO
THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2018

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 1, 2018.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT FROM THURSDAY,
MARCH 1, 2018, TO MONDAY,
MARCH 5, 2018

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on Thursday, March 1, 2018, it adjourn to meet on Monday, March 5, 2018, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
OF H.R. 1865, ALLOW STATES
AND VICTIMS TO FIGHT ONLINE
SEX TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2017

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 748 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 748

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1865) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that section 230 of such Act does not prohibit the enforcement against providers and users of interactive computer services of Federal and State criminal and civil law relating to sexual exploitation of children or sex trafficking, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those

printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), my friend, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Resolution 748, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring forward this rule on behalf of the Rules Committee.

The rule provides for consideration of H.R. 1865, the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017. The rule provides for 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee. The rule also provides for a motion to recommit.

In addition to an amendment offered by the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the rule makes in order amendments offered by Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California and Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas.

Yesterday, the Rules Committee received testimony from numerous Members, including Mr. MARINO, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and the legislation's sponsor, Mrs. WAGNER.

In addition to consideration at the Rules Committee, the legislation was marked up at the House Judiciary Committee last year.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot think of any crime more debased than when one person forces a fellow human being into sexual slavery.

Through many pieces of legislation that the House considered this year, we have been fighting to rid our communities of sex traffickers and the anguish they leave in their wake. Today, we have the opportunity to pass an important piece of legislation that will further this fight by ensuring that we hold websites that turn a profit by aiding sex traffickers accountable.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the committee for its hard work on this legislation, but also, more, importantly, I would like to thank the legislation's author, Mrs. WAGNER, for her tireless efforts in championing this bill, which extends both compassion and justice to trafficking victims. As a result of her efforts, the legislation we consider today will empower law enforcement, State attorneys general, and, most importantly, victims to fight against the sex trade and its predators.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation would give Federal, State, and local prosecutors the tools they need to hold websites and their operators accountable for supporting the sale of sex trafficking victims. Specifically, it would create a new Federal statute with increased penalties for promoting sex trafficking online and would amend section 230 of the Communications Decency Act to permit State authorities to prosecute operators of trafficking websites for criminal acts.

In consideration of this legislation, we must also reflect on why this legislation is necessary.

Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act was created to ensure that websites would not be considered the publishers of, and thereby held responsible for, the content that actually originated with a third party. The statute was never intended to shield websites that profit by creating a marketplace for sexual slavery, like Backpage.com, from facing the legal consequences of their criminal enterprises.

Nevertheless, some websites have successfully invoked the section 230 immunity provision despite engaging in actions that venture far outside the scope of those envisioned by the statute. The authors of the Communications Decency Act did not imagine that wicked men and women would turn vulnerable young people into sexual commodities and then say, "Let's protect those predators."

Mr. Speaker, no law condones such sexual exploitation, and no law should be manipulated to condone such abuse. With the addition of Mrs. WALTERS' amendment, this legislation strikes the important balance of preserving section 230 of the Communications Decency Act for law-abiding websites, while ensuring that bad actors can no longer hide behind a misused statute.

This legislation will ensure that our society continues to protect the innocent and punish those who seek to profit from their sexual enslavement.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.